



# SECURE & PREPARED

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## Volume 7, Issue 16

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## On the Calendar...

### October

Crime Prevention Month  
Cyber Security Awareness Month  
Fire Prevention Week (9-15)  
America's Safe Schools Week (16-22)

### November

Winter Weather Awareness Day (10)  
Veteran's Day (11)\*  
Thanksgiving Day (24)\*  
Day after Thanksgiving (25)\*

*\*State holiday. HSEMD offices will be closed.*

## Governor Branstad Appeals FEMA Denial

On Oct. 6, Governor Terry E. Branstad submitted an appeal to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) asking it to reconsider its denial of his request to make individual disaster assistance available to Iowans impacted by Missouri River flooding.

On Aug. 4, 2011, FEMA denied the Governor's request to activate the Individual Assistance (IA) program, which would provide aid to homeowners, renters and businesses in the affected counties. Following the denial, the Governor directed the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD) to work closely with the local emergency management agencies to determine additional damage and impacts caused by the ongoing flooding. In addition,



**Sept. 28, 2011 – Teams of local, state, and federal officials toured six counties Sept. 27-30 to assess damage caused by Missouri River flooding. One team found collapsed basement walls at this home in Council Bluffs.**

HSEMD worked with the Safeguard Iowa Partnership to gather information from businesses to help show the true economic impact of the Missouri River flooding.

Due to the receding of the Missouri River over the past few weeks, teams of local,  
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## Fremont County: "Don't forget about us"

*HSEMD PIO Stefanie Bond spent the day in Pottawattamie and Fremont counties on Sept. 28. During her visit, she was able to see some of the areas affected by this summer's flooding.*

You may have heard something about a flood on the Missouri River this summer. Or, most recently about water retreating back to the river's banks and

people returning to their homes. Omaha Mayor Jim Suttle told reporters in mid-September that the flood fight was over. "We beat this river," he proclaimed.

The flood fight may very well be over in Omaha, but residents in Fremont County, Iowa, would say folks on this side of the river are still battling.

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## Governor Branstad Appeals FEMA Denial

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state and federal officials recently were able to document additional damages to homes and businesses since the first assessment was done in July. This damage information, along with information on the economic impact to the region, has been used to support the Governor's appeal for activation of the IA program.

"This second assessment of damages has shown a significant increase in the number of homes and businesses impacted by the flooding of the Missouri River," said Branstad. "Now we have a much clearer picture of the true extent of the damage to support our appeal to FEMA for assistance."

A number of factors are used to determine a state's eligibility for assistance, including concentration and impact of damages, amount of insurance coverage and the extent to which voluntary agencies and state and local programs can meet the needs of the disaster victims, as well as the state's population. Iowa is classified by FEMA as a medium-sized state, with a population between two and 10 million. Nebraska, which has received a declaration for IA, is classified as a small state and had to meet lesser criteria to be declared eligible.

The FEMA IA program, for homeowners, renters and businesses, can include grants and low-interest loans to help pay for temporary housing, home repairs and other disaster-related expenses not covered by insurance or other aid programs. Ω

## Survey Reveals Damage to Businesses

This summer's Missouri River flooding has had a significant impact on businesses along the Missouri River, according to a survey taken by the Safeguard Iowa Partnership (SIP).

Results of the survey, conducted in partnership with the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD), were used in the appeal by Governor Branstad to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for its denial of assistance to Iowans in counties along the Missouri River. Work done by SIP was used to help show the true economic impact of the flooding in Woodbury, Monona, Harrison, Pottawattamie, Mills and Fremont counties.

"To truly understand and appreciate the impacts to a community following a disaster, we must step back and look at the community as a whole," said Jami Haberl, executive director of SIP. "What impacts were there to the individual homeowners, the public infrastructure (cities, counties) and lastly, the business community? If any one of the three fail, the other two will soon fail."

The appeal followed an Aug. 4 denial of the Governor's request to activate the Individual Assistance Program, which would provide aid to homeowners, renters and businesses in the affected coun-

ties. SIP was asked by the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division to work with businesses to get a clearer picture of the damage they had sustained from the flooding. SIP asked businesses that spent funds to prevent or mitigate flood damage, those with physical damage and those with indirect damages to complete an online survey. The results of the survey showed that substantial losses

were sustained by businesses not only directly in the path of the flood waters, but that many businesses were indirectly affected from the migration of residents from these areas.

"The information the Safeguard Iowa Partnership collected from business helped us to put together a much clearer picture of the true extent of the damage caused by the Missouri River flooding," said HSEMD Administrator Derek Hill.

The Safeguard Iowa Partnership is a 501c3 nonprofit involving government, private-sector, higher education and nonprofit organizations. Its mission is to strengthen the capacity of Iowa to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters through public-private collaboration. Information about SIP, as well as the results of the survey, can be found at [www.safeguard-iowa.org](http://www.safeguard-iowa.org). Ω





## Don't forget about us

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Although the swollen Missouri River has been steadily going down as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began lowering the amount of water it is releasing upstream at Gavins Point Dam in South Dakota – the “fight” is hardly over in western Iowa.

“We don’t want people to forget about us,” said Pat Sheldon, chairman of the Fremont County Emergency Management Commission.

Last week I had the opportunity to see the effect the mighty Missouri has had on areas of Pottawattamie and Fremont counties. In Pottawattamie County, I traveled with one of three damage assessment teams that surveyed damage in six counties along the river. The teams were made up of local, state (including HSEMD) and federal officials who were working together to capture information on every home damaged by flood waters. I saw collapsed basement walls and condemned properties deemed “unsafe” for habitation. I saw cracked foundations. I saw homes still under water.

Later that same day in Fremont County, I saw a 100-foot breach in a levee northwest of Percival. I saw buckled roads. I saw propane tanks and debris littering the countryside. I saw tons of sand, displaced by floodwaters, deposited on roads and land where crops used to grow. I saw fish that will likely die once the ponds they are now living in, left by retreating water, dries up. And, I saw farm fields and homes still inundated or surrounded by water.

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**Sept. 28–(Above) Lt. Gov. Reynolds holds a press conference near floodwaters north of Percival.**



**July 4–(Above) Highway 2 just west of I-29 in Fremont County. (Right) The same road on September 28, after flood waters have receded.**



**Sept. 28–(Above) An impassable road in Fremont County.**

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A division of the Iowa Department of Public Defense

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### HSEMD Mission

Lead, coordinate, and support homeland security and emergency management functions in order to establish sustainable communities and ensure economic opportunities for Iowa and its citizens.

## We're on the Web!

[www.iowahomelandsecurity.org](http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org)

# State Individual Assistance Available to Flood Victims in Western Iowa

When a disaster occurs, the Governor will often issue a Disaster Proclamation in the affected counties. When a Governor's Disaster Proclamation is made in an Iowa county, the State Individual Assistance (IA) Program can be activated at the request of local officials to help those Iowans adversely affected.



The State IA Program provides up to \$5,000 in reimbursements for damages incurred for families whose income is at or below twice the federal poverty level. The program is administered by the Iowa Department of Human Services. When the program is activated, information and application instruc-

tions are available on the **IDHS website**.

If a Presidential Disaster Declaration for Individual Assistance is issued for the same event, the state program is automatically canceled as the federal program then goes into effect.

At this time, there are 14 counties in Iowa where citizens may apply for State IA benefits: Benton, Dickinson, Dubuque, Emmet, Fremont, Harrison, Marion, Marshall, Mills, Monona, Pottawattamie, Story, Tama and Woodbury. The deadline to apply in all counties except Emmet is Oct. 26. The deadline to apply in Emmet County is Nov. 6. Ω

## Don't forget about us

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It was a lot of water... but I was reminded that this was far less water than there had been all summer.

There was a small group of us touring Fremont County, including Lieutenant Governor Kim Reynolds and County Emergency Management Coordinator Mike Crecelius. It is really hard to put things into perspective when only viewing aerial photography of flooding. You have to be on the ground to understand how vast the impact of this disaster is.

Now that the last damage assessments have been completed, and the Governor has officially appealed FEMA's denial of Individual

Assistance funding – which could be a lifeline for many residents in western Iowa – I am hoping and praying for a reversal of fortune that will help these people. The people who not only have been forced out of their homes since June, but are now paying rent somewhere in addition to their regular mortgage or rent payments. The people who have no idea what they will find when they are allowed to return to their homes, and the people who have returned only to find their home and belongings in ruin.

We haven't forgotten about you, Fremont County. Or Harrison, Mills, Monona, Pottawattamie and Woodbury counties. The fight isn't over. Ω